

Bates-Ryder House  
1399 East Avenue  
Rochester  
Monroe County  
New York

HABS No. NY-5639

HABS  
NY

28 ROCH,  
13

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. NY-5639

BATES-RYDER HOUSE

NY,  
28-ROCH,  
13-

Location: 1399 East Avenue, southeast corner of East Avenue and Hawthorne Street, Rochester, Monroe County, New York

Present Owner and Occupant: Miss Helen Ryder, daughter of Thomas B. Ryder

Present Use: Private residence

Statement of Significance: This large Italianate villa built at the height of this style's popularity is one of the few remaining in the area. It is representative of the earlier residences built along East Avenue, Rochester's "Gold Coast." The Bates-Ryder House is located in the City of Rochester's East Avenue Preservation District.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1856.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: "... seven and five hundredths acres of land in lot thirty-five in the second division of lots in the town of Brighton, located on the south side of the Rochester to Brighton Village Road, now East Avenue..."

1856 Deed, February 28, 1856, Book 130, p. 231.

From: Elisha Blossom and Maria, his wife.

To: Maria H. Bates, wife of Thomas C. Bates.

For: \$3, 526.84.

1875 Deed, June 12, 1875, Book 286, p. 157.

From: Thomas C. Bates and Maria M. Bates of Brighton.

To: Thomas Leighton.

For: \$42,000.00.

1886 Will of Thomas Leighton, Book 619.

To: His wife and upon her death to her two children, William T. Leighton and Helene Tappan Leighton.

1902 Deed, April 8, 1902, Book 653, p. 445.  
From: William Leighton.  
To: Helene Leighton, one half share.

1902 Deed, September 8, 1902, Book 659, p. 477.  
From: Helene T. Leighton.  
To: Thomas B. Ryder.  
This sale included only that property on which the house sits. The other portions of the original parcel were sold separately at this time.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Unknown.
5. Original plans: Unknown.
6. Alterations and additions: The rear wing was enlarged and extended after the purchase by Thomas Leighton, June 12, 1875. At this time the house was the largest on East Avenue. Foster Warner, local architect, did extensive remodeling to the rear of the house, date unknown. Further remodeling and repair was done in recent years following a fire.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

Col. Thomas C. Bates was a canal forwarder and railroad contractor who had married Maria Blossom. The Blossom family was one of the earliest to settle in the town of Brighton. Thomas Leighton, to whom Bates sold the property in 1875, was the owner of the Leighton Bridge and Iron Works, which he had moved to Rochester from Buffalo in 1873. This \$1,000,000.00 a year business employed 200 people and specialized in railroad and highway bridges made of "American Riveted Lattice." Leighton was a director of the Rochester City Hospital and president of the City Bank of Rochester. Thomas B. Ryder was a prominent citizen and drygoods merchant associated with Sibley, Lindsay and Carr, the largest department store in Rochester.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: An etching of the structure appears in Prof. W. H. McIntosh, History of Monroe County, New York, plate VIII.
2. Bibliography:
  - a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Deeds, Office of Monroe County Clerk.

Incomplete inventory of furnishings, Landmark  
Society of Western New York.

Wills, Surrogate's Court, Hall of Justice.

b. Secondary and published sources:

McIntosh, Prof. W. H. History of Monroe County,  
New York. Philadelphia, Everts, Ensign and Everts,  
1876.

McKelvey, Blake. "East Avenue's Turbulent History."  
Rochester History, Special edition, 1966.

Malo, Paul. Landmarks of Rochester and Monroe  
County: A Guide to Neighborhoods and Villages.  
Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1974.

3. Likely sources not yet investigated:

Records of Leighton Bridge and Iron Works.

Ryder family papers.

Prepared by Kevin Patrick Harrington  
Society For the Pre-  
servation of Landmarks  
in Western New York  
December 6, 1966

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Although some architectural detail has been eliminated or altered, the massing and forms of this Italianate villa exemplify the residential dignity of the development of East Avenue.
2. Condition of fabric: The structure has been well maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Forty-five feet by forty-eight feet; four bay north facade; two story main portion and three story tower and rear wing; L-shaped plan.

2. Foundations: The elevated dressed stone foundation projects slightly from the wall surfaces, forming a water table.
3. Wall construction: The brick walls painted pink are accented by a deeply molded string course between first and second floors. All trim is painted a dark brown.
4. Structural system, framing: Masonry walls are load bearing.
5. Chimneys: Four brick chimneys, one on the tower and three on the rear wing, have stepped banding.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The heavily carved and molded double main entrance doors are slightly recessed by the flanking paired, squared pilasters which have deeply projecting molded capitals. A large glazed fanlight with centered keystone is flanked by plain, molded rondels. The simply paneled doors leading from the music room and the rear hall to the west porch are set in simply molded frames topped by deeply molded lintels. The rear south door is slightly recessed in a simple frame finished with a rectangular toplight. A contemporary glazed and paneled door located at the west end of the rear porch leads to the basement.
  - b. Windows: In the original north portion of the house, most windows have double hung, four over four light sashes with deeply molded and bracketed sills. All are capped with deeply molded stepped hoods. A pair of arched windows with a single pilastered center stile and deeply molded bracketed hood and sill is located on the second floor, north facade, to the west of the entrance porch. On the north facade most windows are paired. The first floor tower window to the north is treated similarly to those above, except that the sill has been eliminated. Two solid panels extend from the bottom of the sash to the top of the water table. First and second story tower windows to the east and west are single units with the described decorative treatment. The single second story north window is finished with a simple sill which nearly rests on the prominent string course. The four tower window units of the third story are composed of

paired arched double hung four over four light sashes finished with the molded and bracketed sill. The single center stile is pilastered. The brackets extending from the sills rest on molded courses which are recessed into the larger framing of the full tower, and, therefore, are not continuous. A two story bay window on the west facade has a paired window to the west and single windows to the north and south. The second floor windows are unadorned. The bay is capped by a truncated metal hood which is finished with scalloped sawn eaves with routed vertical accents. To the east, the living room has a large three-part window with rectangular toplights and center French door. The dining room has a three-part bay window. Both are later additions. All windows on the rear wing are double hung with single light sashes. All have slightly extended flat rectangular headers and sills. There are two unadorned oriel windows on the second floor of the wing, one to the east and one to the west.

7. Roof: The flat roof is topped by a paneled parapet with corner blocks. Deep, flat overhanging eaves may have been bracketed at one time. The tower eaves have elaborate paired corner brackets.
8. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: The main entrance is located in an enclosed porch which is set in the southwest angle of the tower and north facade. A four step stone stair is finished with wrought iron railing. The west wall treatment of this porch is similar to the north wall which consists of the entrance door and doorway. An arched window is recessed by the flanking pilasters. A deep, flat eave extends from the string course. The whole is topped by an open parapet with molded corner blocks. The L-shaped open arcaded porch on the west facade is supported by square columns with deeply molded capitals. The deep overhanging eaves do not correspond to the string course. The porch, which is elevated six steps, is supported by stone pillars filled in with wood lattice work. An open three square columned porch is located on the south facade of the wing. A raised terrace with decorative wrought iron railing and iron framing for an awning is located at the north end of the east side. Access is provided by four steps from the exterior or via a French door from the living room.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: The north main entrance opens into a center hall with the music room to the west, the library in the base of the tower to the north, the living room to the east, and the rear hall to the south. The enclosed rear hall opens into the kitchen. The caretaker's quarters, rear stair, rear south porch, and dining room all open into the kitchen. The second floor rooms are similarly arranged, with three large bedrooms and a sitting room. A study is located in the tower.
2. Stairways: An open curved staircase located on the west wall of the center hall has two turned balusters per step and a molded handrail which rises from a turned and carved newel post. The exposed stringer is finished with a decorative plaster rope motif. There are elaborate plaster step brackets. An enclosed single flight of stairs located between the original portion and addition extends from the first to the second floor.
3. Flooring: Some first floor rooms have contemporary parquet floors. The center hall and second floor rooms are finished with narrow oak strips laid in rectangular patterns.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: All walls and ceilings in the formal rooms are elaborately plastered. The center hall has a delicate strapwork patterned ceiling which is accented by drop rosettes. A large rosette receives the top hanging ornament of a French crystal chandelier. A deeply molded cornice is fitted with plaster carving. A row of Wedgewood-like floral plaster motifs is applied to the wall below the cornice. A molded and paneled dado is finished with delicate plaster ropework. The music room is finished with a similar cornice. A plaster band of running octagons finished with an open egg and dart motif is applied to the ceiling. A narrow band consisting of elongated panels accented with rondels and finished with ropework is applied to the wall below the cornice, vertically in the corners of the room and above the baseboards. A large plaster rosette from which hangs a French chandelier is centered in the ceiling. The library is finished with oak paneling. It has a slightly vaulted plaster ceiling accentuated by narrow bands of rosettes extending to the corners from a larger center rosette. The wainscoted living room has more simple plaster cornices and center ceiling decoration. In the dining room the acanthus

leaf plaster cornice is finished with an egg and dart molding. The walls are finished with wainscoting. All ceilings on the first floor are thirteen feet high. The principal front rooms on the second floor have minimal ceiling and wall decoration. Rooms to the rear have little decoration.

5. Doorways and doors: The two-leaf, arched interior north entrance doors with glazed panels above deeply molded solid lower panels are set in a deeply molded frame. The two-leaf and single leaf doors in the music room are paneled in three sections, each containing two deeply molded octagonal forms. These doors are set in deeply molded frames which have a bold plaster ropework section. Other doors throughout the original house area are more simply paneled and framed.
6. Special decorative features: In the music room, the marble fireplace with carved cartouche has a simple mantel and surround. The library is fitted with a carved oak fireplace. The living room fireplace has a French sandstone surround topped by an English walnut mantle. There are fireplaces in the principal rooms on the second floor.
7. Hardware: None of note.
8. Mechanical equipment:
  - a. Heating: There are floor registers and radiators to accommodate forced air and steam heat systems.
  - b. Lighting: No original fixtures remain.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house, sited on a four hundred square foot lot, faces north toward the broad three-lined East Avenue.
2. Historic landscape design: The tree-lined circular drive extends from the street to the main north entrance. An extension along the west facade leads to the garage.
3. Outbuildings: A board and batten, one and a half story cottage to the south is believed to be earlier than the house. A two story brick garage with living area on the second floor is located to the southwest of the house.



4. Walks: A cement walk leads from the street to the driveway at the northwest corner of the house and then extends along the west facade.

Prepared by Amy Hecker  
Society For the Pre-  
servation of Land-  
marks in Western New  
York  
October, 1972

### PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This recording project of twenty-six selections of historical and architecturally significant Rochester structures was undertaken in 1966, by the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York, Inc., Mrs. Patrick Harrington, Executive Director, in cooperation with the Historic American Buildings Survey, James C. Massey, Chief. The project was under the general direction of John Poppeliers, Senior Historian. Architectural and historical descriptions were contributed by the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York, Inc. General photographic documentation was undertaken by Hans Padelt, Senior Engineer, Graflex, on a contractual basis with the Historic American Buildings Survey. The final documentation and editing was done by Susan R. Slade in 1978, for transmittal to the Library of Congress and the impending publication of the Historic American Buildings Survey New York State catalogue.